(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the action, if any, proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), vide the 24th Amendment to the Telecom Tariff Order (TTO) 1999, issued on 24.01.2003, revised the prevalent tariffs of telecommunication services. The implementation of the tariff was postponed to 1 st May, 2003 *vide* the 26th Amendment to the Telecom Tariff Order (TTO) dated 27th March, 2003. The tariff announced by TRAI is Standard Tariff Package, and service providers can and will offer alternative tariff packages to subscribers, depending upon consumer preferences.

(b) As per TRAI Act, 1997, as amended in 2000, the power of fixing tariff for telecom services is mandated to the TRAI alone. The Government no longer fixes tariffs for telecom services in the country. TRAI is now the only Authority for exercising this power.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Basic telephone services by Private Companies

†3602. SHRI LAJPAT RAI :
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had issued licenses on licence fee basis to certain companies in private sector to operate basic telephone services in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that they had been told, at the time of issuing licences to instal village public telephones in the villages of the said States;

(c) if so, the number of VPTs required to be installed by each company;

(d) the number of VPTs installed by December, 2002; and

†Originai notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether they have been penalised monetarily on account of non-installation of telephones and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The details are as given below :-

Name of the Company/Service Area	No. of VPTs to be installed during first three years of effective date	No. of VPTs installed by December, 2002
M/s Bharti Telenet Ltd. Madhya Pradesh"*	16500	348
M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd. Andhra Pradesh*	9635	1314
M/s Hughes Telecom now (Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd., Maharashtra**	25760	1140
M/s Reliance Telecom Ltd. Gujarat*	8635	2894
M/s Shyam Telelink Ltd. Rajasthan***	31834	693
M/s HFCL Infotel Ltd. Punjab*	5442	734®

(The above figures are as reported by the licensees)

* These commitments were to be met be 30.9.1998

** These commitments were to be met by 30.9.1999

*** These commitments were to be met by 30.9.2000 in respect of Madhya Pradesh and 4.3.2001 in respect of Rajasthan.

@ As all villages have been covered by BSNL in Punjab, the faulty MARRs are to be replaced by the private licensee.

(e) For delay in performance, Liquidated Damages (LD) have been recovered as detailed below :

Name of the operator	Service Aera	Total LD Charged for non commissioning of service & delay in provision of VPTs and Direct Exchange Lines (in crores of Rs.)
Bharti Telenet Ltd.	Madhya Pradesh	4.00
TataTeleservices Ltd.	Andhra Pradesh	13.00
TataTeleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd.	Maharashtra	7.75
Reliance Telecom Ltd.	Gujarat	13.00
Shyam Telelink Ltd.	Rajasthan	8.00
HFCL Infotel Ltd.	Punjab	8.00
	TOTAL	53.75

Free I.T.C. card in Noida

†3603. SHRI MOTILAL VORA :
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in NOIDA free ITC cards are provided with a new connection;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to make such facility available in other parts of the country also;

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (c) BSNL has introduced a free ITC card scheme on 17.7.2002, with each new telephone connection for those urban areas, where switching capacity is available but adequate waiting list does not exist.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.